Federal Agency Report Summary

Out of 18 Agency responses:

- **Subcommittee/Working Group Participation – 83%** participate on an FGDC Subcommittee or Working Group, which they do not lead.
- **Strategy – 72%** have prepared a detailed strategy for integrating geographic information and spatial data activities into their business process.
- **Compliance – 94%** have spatial data holdings compliant with FGDC Standards.
- **Performance Measures – 61%** have performance measures for spatial data activities.
- **Redundancy – 89%** ensure that data is not already available prior to collection.
- **Collection – 61%** of contracts and grants involving data collection include costs for NSDI standards.
- **Clearinghouse – 55%** have data and metadata published on the NSDI Clearinghouse.
- **Planned Investments – 33%** post information on planned geospatial investments to the GOS Portal.
- **Geodata.gov – 44%** have registered their Clearinghouse node to geodata.gov for regular harvesting
- **E-Gov – 89%** use geospatial data in their mission activities to provide better services.
- **Geospatial One Stop – 89%** are involved in the Geospatial One Stop Initiative.
- **Enterprise Architecture – 89%** have geospatial data as a component of their enterprise architecture (or are building an enterprise architecture that will include geospatial data)
- **Partnerships – 94%** coordinate data and build partnerships for data collection and standards development.

Areas of Concern:

- Subcommittees and Working Groups - During the FGDC Future Directions effort, review of subcommittees and working group charters should focus on defining a clear mission in light of any changes developed in the future direction effort. Would also suggest retiring groups that may have served their chartered purpose.

- Unfunded Mandates - A major concern is the ever increasing number of non-funded mandates from sources outside the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the area of spatial data. While the overall intent of these mandates is inherently good (i.e., to reduce duplication of effort, improve data consistency, etc.), the sheer volume of directives and data calls far exceeds the Service's ability to adequately respond with existing resources.

- Sharing Data - The CDC National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) has approached several Program Areas to publish their spatial data, create the metadata, and then publish that data for sharing as required by A-16; programs have been reluctant to participate in the effort. An Agency-level policy is needed

to promote awareness and to require/urge CDC Programs to publish and share their spatial data and to create the required FGDC Metadata for those datasets.

- Metadata - In our experience, FGDC Metadata authoring is a daunting task. All authoring tools we evaluated, commercial and Public Domain seemed to be difficult to use even for computer experts. A more user-friendly and more efficient FGDC Metadata authoring tool would definitely help this initiative.

- Metadata - FGDC needs to promote and support easy mechanisms for developing metadata development at the time the data are collected (e.g. ARC catalogue) and let developers know that these tools exist. The large number of elements required to meet FGDC metadata requirements increase the level of effort and commitment necessary to comply with the requirement

- Consistency – The ability to smoothly integrate a point's coordinates with other points from different sources has been addressed by the promulgation of official national datums. The North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) applies to horizontal coordinates and ellipsoid heights and the North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD 88) applies to vertical coordinates. Software tools for have been developed by NGS to transform coordinates between datums.

- Accuracy – The ability to regularly achieve high levels (a few centimeters) of positional accuracy has been vastly improved by employing GPS techniques developed by NGS. This effort continues in concert with enhancements to GPS satellites.

- Timeliness – The ability to determine consistent and accurate coordinates when there needed (i.e., as quickly as possible) is the major issue at present, as the longer it takes to accurately position a point, the greater the labor costs per point. Techniques, procedures, and best practices are continually being developed by NGS to reduce the time required to position a point to the desired level of accuracy.

- Volumes of Data are of concern and access and use of data through open standards.

Lessons Learned:

- Funding - Without sufficient funding, Agencies cannot implement GIS into mission activities in a timely or effective manner. Lack of funding limits our ability to improve services and fully integrate E-Gov capabilities into day-to-day operations.

- Funding - Funding for GIS initiatives has been inconsistent, and when funded, resources are generally limited. Without consistent funding, it is extremely difficult for Federal agencies to collaborate with state and local entities in a timely manner and capitalize pooled resources for data acquisition.

- Business Processes - Developing and implementing geospatial data systems must be based upon well defined business processes including maintenance processes to ensure the usability, reliability and accuracy of the data on an ongoing basis.

- USGS Reorganization - The continued convergence of federal coordinating efforts such as Geospatial One Stop, National Map and FGDC is positive and should greatly increase the strength of the NSDI.

- Coordination Bodies - Enhanced linkages with coordination bodies focused on data production like NDOP and NDEP should be leveraged.

- Geodata.gov - The Geodata.gov Marketplace may be an opportunity to develop formal partner groups such as NDEP and NDOP to further enhance data development for a specific theme of data.

- Facilities - The accurate identification of facilities according to type and location (including remote facilities), using proper standards for data collection and measures to ensure standards compliance, is critical for data management and sharing.